

A /
T R E A T I S E
O F T H E
Visitation of the Sick;
O R, O F T H E
Duties of the Parochial Clergy.

Which concern those that are dangerously ill.

Published for the Use of Young Divines, and those who have
not been much Conversant in this Important Duty.

By *JOHN STEARNE*, D. D.

ATTEMPTED IN ENGLISH
By a COUNTRY CLERGYMAN.

*Be not slow to Visit the Sick, for that shall make thee to
be beloved. - Ecclus. 7, ver. 35.*

I was Sick and ye Visited me. Mat. 25, 36.

*Is any Sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the
Church, and let them Pray over him. St. James, v. 14.*

E X E T E R:

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BY JOHN STEWART, D.D.

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IN THE YEAR 1841

AND IN THE YEAR 1842

AND IN THE YEAR 1843

AND IN THE YEAR 1844

AND IN THE YEAR 1845

AND IN THE YEAR 1846

P R E F A C E

THERE is such a peculiar Vein of Piety and good Sense in this small Christian Manual, which is in very few Hands, that I thought a plain and familiar Translation of it out of the Latin into the English Language, might be of particular Service for the Reasons given by the late ingenious Mr. Boswell, in his Method of Study, Vol. 2. Page 127, who gives the following Character of it: "How to perform this important Part of the Pastoral Office in a proper Manner, is the great Difficulty: To prescribe Rules, or a Method for this Purpose, that shall answer all the Emergencies attending Sick Persons, is scarcely practicable.

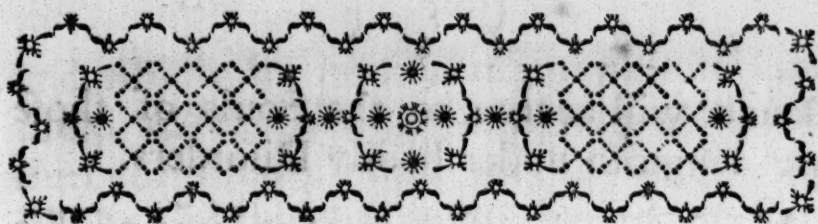
"However, some general Directions of this Kind may not be unserviceable. The best that I have met with are found in a little useful Treatise entitled, Tractatus de Visitatione infirmorum, &c. Authore Johanne Stearne, S. T. D. This Author appears to have studied the Subject in a particular Manner, and to have had a masterly Insight into the Infirmities of Humanity; he having mentioned almost all the Cases, and spiritual Indispositions, that sick Persons are liable to, and directed suitable Applications for the Cure and Removal of them. I shall therefore

P R E F A C E.

fore refer the Reader to the Treatise itself, and only take Notice of an Observation or two made by this judicious Author, which are too material to be omitted.

“The Author is very justly of Opinion, that a Minister of a Parish ought to be furnished with some short, pathetic Discourses, suited to the several Tempers and Conditions of sick Persons, with which he may be able to address them whenever an Occasion offers. He therefore gives us several Specimens adapted to the different Cases of Sick People, which must be useful Hints to young Clergymen, and if altered in a discreet Manner, as the Exigencies of the Age, and the Circumstances of Persons shall require, cannot fail of being extremely serviceable to the Purposes for which they were intended.

“If it be asked how a Minister can know the particular Cases of Sick Persons, or be able to make his Exhortations suitable to their respective Conditions? I answer, by asking them proper Questions; by enquiring into their Manner of Life; by advising them to disburthen their Consciences, and if they are uneasy, to lay open their Grief, and declare the Occasion of it. When this is done, when the Wound is opened in this Manner, the Application is easy, and Oil or Balsam, or rougher Medicines may be pour'd in as the Nature of the Disaster shall require.”



THE
DESIGN
OF THIS
CHRISTIAN MANUAL.



HE that impartially weighs and considers the various Duties which are required of an Evangelical Pastor, or Minister of the Gospel, will hardly find any more necessary or difficult to be performed than those which should be discharged towards sick Persons: Offices so grave and interesting, that they call for the utmost Diligence and most consummate Prudence; and if they are either wholly omitted, or slightly and indiscreetly executed, 'tis much to be feared that very great
A Danger

Danger will accrue to the Souls of those who languish under bodily Disorders.

If I should therefore treat at large of this Part of the Sacerdotal Office, or commit to writing what has either occurred to me from my own Observations, or private Conferences held with others, or been collected from Authors, I thought I might do an acceptable Piece of Service to the Public thereby, especially as I know of no professed *Treatise* upon the Subject, from whence the most attentive Reader may be furnished with Directions for the due Discharge of it. But I don't say this in order to lessen the just Praises of others, or depreciate their Labours on this Subject; on the contrary, I think myself much assisted by them, and readily acknowledge the Obligation. And after all I would not be understood to warrant even this to be a compleat Work, and free from Errors and Imperfections; for should I be vain enough to aim at such a thing, I must be sensible that 'tis far beyond my Abilities to execute it.

My sole End in this Publication is to lay down such Rules as may be of some Use to the Clergy and Ministers of the Gospel,
and

and which in particular may afford some Help to the younger or less experienced Part of them: And relying upon God's Blessing, I don't despair of obtaining my Ends. And I shall reduce those Rules to seven Classes,—whereof

The 1st shall contain some Rules concerning certain Particulars which the Pastor ought to provide himself with, before he undertakes this great Work.

2d. *Shall teach those Things which are necessary to be performed to the sick Persons themselves in the Course of the Visitation.*

3d. *Will have an Eye to those Admonitions which ought to be addressed to those who attend the Sick.*

4th. *Contains Rules for visiting those with whom the Pastor is not well acquainted.*

5th. *Relates to those who are troubled in Mind.*

6th. *Points out Rules for visiting those who begin to recover.*

7th. *Treats of those who are not arrived at Years of Discretion.*

To which will be added, by Way of Appendix, the various Methods proper to be used in bringing such Persons to a Sense, and, if necessary, to a Confession of their Sins.

(4)
C L A S S I.

Containing some Rules concerning certain Particulars which the Pastor ought to provide himself with before he undertakes this great Work.

HE who enters into Holy Orders, and takes upon him the Care of Souls, ought, in the first Place, to furnish himself with some exact Catalogue of Vices, and opposite each Vice to set down those Places of Scripture which expressly forbid and denounce God's Vengeance against it.

By these Means, when he is sent for to visit a sick Man, he will very easily recall to his Memory his principal Failings or Transgressions, and convince him of their Guilt, and the Dangers that will attend them, (unless prevented by a timely and sincere Repentance). And that such a Table may be the more useful, let him so dispose and arrange the Failings, according to the various States of Mankind, that he may discern at one View what is peculiar to every Condition. For since every one most frequently falls into those Vices, which are peculiar to his Way of Life, it is very right and necessary that the Pastor should be able to point out those Vices to every Individual,

Individual, to which he is more liable, by his Business or Calling in Life.

It were much to be wished, if the Times would bear it, that every Minister would get a Paper Book, in which he should so write down the respective Names of each Parishioner, that one or two Leaves may be allotted for each Family, and under each Name he would register each Person's Age and State of Life, and whatever Intelligence he may get of him, by Accident or private Enquiry, either worthy of Praise or Blame.

He should also mark down all other Things which he thinks it will be for the Interest of his Parishioners for him to remember; for as by this Method he will be able to edify those who enjoy their Health, by applying seasonable Reproofs, and exhorting them to persevere in Piety and good Works; so when he approaches the sick Man, he will never be at a Loss how to address him in a Manner that will suit his Condition; and being certain of his Disorders, he will easily make such a happy Application as becomes a spiritual Physician.

But for Fear such a Book should fall into improper Hands, in remarking those Things
which

which merit Shame and Punishment, let him use a Cypher or Character peculiar to himself, lest this Knowledge should turn to the Hurt of his Brother, which he designed for his Good.

Let the Minister also take Heed that he does not pervert and make an ill Use of these written Observations, nor wrest his private Knowledge of secret Faults to any other End, besides saving of the Soul, and the Reformation of Morals in *him* whose Vices shall have been inserted or noted in this Book. Let the Minister also collect from several Authors Prayers suitable to all Occasions, if they can be found ; or let him compose some himself occasionally, by Way of Supplement to those in the Form prescribed in the Liturgy ; and these I would have fram'd in such a Manner as not only to be expressive of, and to excite a lively Sense of Devotion, but also dexterously to insinuate those Truths into the Minds of the Ignorant, and the Forgetful or Drowsy, which we cannot always with Decency be very explicit in, without giving Offence to their Minds, and prejudicing them against our other Counsels.

The Pastor at least ought to get two general

neral Forms of Prayer, one to be put up for the Presumptuous, replete with those Menaces, which are denounced in Scripture against all immoral Actions; the other to be used for the Despairing: And which may express the infinite Mercy of God in the very Words of Scripture.

Prayers of this Sort will shew the Pastor's Care and Judgment, and thereby will beget the Love and Esteem of his Flock, and consequently a Regard to his Instructions; and the Novelty and Piety of his Prayers will give equal Satisfaction; and by the seasonable Doctrine which they convey, they will edify the Sick, and all who are present.

A Minister also should furnish himself with some general Forms of addressing the Sick, and adapted as much as possible to their several Circumstances; otherwise he will be at a Loss sometimes how to speak to them with Propriety; and the following seem to be suitable enough for that Purpose.

The first Form of addressing the Sick in general and ordinary Cases.

YOU may be very well satisfied, Brother, that Sicknefs and such Kind of Evils

Evils are inflicted by God upon Mankind, for wise and salutary Purposes, and to do Good to their Souls ; and therefore all ought to bear them patiently, and with becoming Resignation. I beg you therefore to consider with yourself why this Disorder is inflicted upon you ; and that you would resolve so to order your Manners, that they may correspond with the Divine Intentions : And that you may be the better enabled and more willing to put this in Practice, I would remind you, that God inflicts these Disorders upon us sometimes to prove and try our Patience, and that we ought therefore to bear them with a serene, calm, and steady Mind : At other Times, that he may abate our Fondness for the Things of this World : And therefore 'tis Part of our Duty to draw these Reflections from Sickness, that earthly Things are not at all worthy of our Pursuit, and therefore we ought to set our whole Affections on Things above, and not on Things beneath.

God often, if not always, afflicts us in order to lead us to Repentance ; and 'tis our Duty, therefore, when God's Hand toucheth or presseth us sore, to be truly penitent for past Offences, to hate our former

mer Sins, to apply ourselves to more wholesome Counsels, and turn our Feet unto his Testimonies.

[Lastly, the Pastor, as he sees fit, will exhort them to Patience, and Contempt of the World, and true Repentance, by Arguments drawn from Reason and the revealed Will of God.]

2d. *If the Person be of ill Fame and will not make a voluntary Acknowledgment of his Offences, we may address him in this Manner.*

I Come to thee, Brother, not only to pray to God with thee for the Health of thy Body, but also by exhorting and persuading thee to sincere Repentance, to forward and promote thy eternal Salvation. And I hope it will not be unacceptable to thee, if to this End, I shall remind thee what Character other Persons have given me of thee. For my own Part, I don't easily give Credit to vulgar Reports, for I know most of them to be idle and groundless; but I will not conceal those from thee which are spread abroad concerning thy Morals, for fear there should be more Truth in them than I could wish. If thou canst prove they are false, I shall have something to oppose to their Calumnies for the future, and shall
be

be able to vindicate thine Innocence, which I so earnestly desire ; if I shall hereafter perceive it to be injured by the bitter Sayings of Scoffers, and the Malevolent and Ill-disposed ; but if the Reports should be true, I shall shew how much it is thy Interest to make Haste and become a true Penitent.

[Then the Minister or Pastor will declare (no Persons being present) what Reports he has heard, and agreeable to the sick Man's Answer, will proceed in his Conference with him.]

3d. *If the sick Person be of good Character, the Minister may address him after this Manner.*

I Hope, dear Brother, that those Reports are true which I have heard of you, that you have lived piously, soberly, and unblameably for the Time past ; for then you can look back upon your past Life without Grief and Uneasiness, and ruminate with Pleasure upon the Future ; you can bear this Fatherly Correction of the Almighty with a steady Mind, and with Fortitude submit to the Approaches of Death, as the End of all your Troubles, and the Gate that leadeth to eternal Life and Happiness. You can calmly submit
yourself

yourself to the Will of God, and with *St. Paul*, expect with Confidence and Assurance the Reward of your Constancy and Perseverance, thro' the Merits of *Christ*. But if you are conscious to yourself of private Offences, which are concealed from others, know certainly, that it will not profit you that others think and speak well of you, for God, when he shall come to judge the World, will not pronounce his final Sentence according to the fickle Opinions of Men, but according to his own Knowledge and unerring Wisdom, whereby he most certainly and infallibly knows all Things, past, present, and to come; and according to the Testimony of every one's Conscience, *which will be then more than a thousand Witnesses*, to acquit or condemn him as to what his Actions have been in this World. In this, therefore, you must take more than ordinary Pains, that you may make God your Friend, and quiet your Conscience by a timely and sincere Repentance. And if your Repentance be true and seasonable, God will most certainly blot out all your former Sins, thro' the Merits of our blessed Saviour, and make you at Peace with yourself.

[With Regard to the Rest, the Minister will be furnished with proper Topicks of Discourse from the Answers he shall have received from the sick Person,]

4th. *How a Minister ought to behave himself to a sick Person of another Communion.*

I Don't know, Brother, whether my Visit will be acceptable to you or not, for since I am of a different Communion, perhaps you may suspect that I shall inveigh against the Tenets of your Religion, but don't be afraid of that, for tho' I wish that you and all others who walk unconcernedly in the dangerous Paths of Errors, would return without Delay into the safe Road of Truth ; yet it seems very inconsistent to raise Controversies with sick Persons, and dispute with them about controversial Points, or, it may be, Things indifferent.

But no one will deservedly blame me, nor will you have any Reason to be angry with me, if I advise you in a friendly Manner to do those Things which all Persons think to be a Duty incumbent on a sick Person, and which you cannot omit without the Loss of your Soul, nor even put off for an Hour without the utmost Danger ; nor indeed did I visit you upon any other Account, than to have a Conference with you about the established Duties of all Christians, and to exhort you to Repentance,
allowed

allowed on all Hands to be necessary to all Men.

[Having premised these, let the Minister proceed to explain the Nature of Repentance, to teach the Necessity of it, and to urge him by the strongest Arguments to practise it. And the Visitor will discover, from the Answers of the sick Person himself, what other Things it becomes him to say.]

5th. *In what Manner the Clergy are to address the Rich in Sickness.*

BRother, God hath pour'd down upon you a large Share of the good Things of this World, and therefore it is your Duty to bear patiently those Evils he hath inflicted upon you. And that you may consider your present Sickness as a Mark of Divine Goodness, know that those Afflictions are medicinal, and have their Use; and though they are bitter at present, yet they tend to your Good; for they will teach you the Vanity and Uncertainty of all Things; and how unworthy of our Affection those Things are, which we are so fond of, when they cannot sooth our Pain, nor afford you the least Comfort in your extreme Necessity. Sickness will teach you that you must one Day part with your Riches, and must give a strict Account of all the Talents committed to your Trust
here :

here : And therefore all prudent Persons will so order their worldly Affairs in their Life-time, that they may not prejudice their Happiness in the other World.

And hence, Brother, you will learn, if you have broken the Laws of Justice or Charity, in heaping up or keeping your Riches, not only to beg God's Pardon in a most humble Manner, but to fix your Reflections and Heart at length on Heavenly Things, and to shew your steady Conversion of Soul, by exercising yourself in the Works of Justice, Mercy, and Charity, according to your Power and Ability, both now, and as long as God shall give you Life and Opportunity.

6th. *Which may be used towards the sick Poor.*

I Perceive, my Brother, that you have not obtained worldly Riches, and therefore I hope you have most earnestly sought after the more durable and lasting Ones of the other World, and that you have laid up Treasures in Heaven ; for bad Fortune could not hinder you from acquiring these latter, nay, the Wants you have struggled with were rather serviceable to you, to set your Desires and Affections stronger on
Heavenly

Heavenly Things : For this Cause, I presume, God imposed this Trial upon you. I hope you have been free from all Envy, Impatience, or Distrust, and lived contented with your Lot, and that you can chearfully submit yourself, and all your Concerns, to the Providence of God. And be not in the least grieved or cast down, if you should in a short Time leave your Wife, or your Children, or any other Relations, in Want of Riches or Friends, since you may rest assured, that God, who hath provided for you hitherto, will afterwards provide for them, and will give to each of them whatever is necessary and expedient for them, provided they do not obstruct his good Intentions towards them by their own Misbehaviour.

7th. *To be used with those who are aged.*

BRother, you have lived many Years, and it is not reasonable for you to desire or expect to prolong your Life to a farther Date. What remains now your only Care, is to be ready and prepared for Death, which can't be far off, that you may be ready to give up an Account to God of such a long Course of Time. I hope you have a long Time thought of Death as near at Hand ;

Hand ; that you have employed your leisure Hours in Prayers and sacred Meditations, and have taken the utmost Care of your Soul's Health ; and therefore nothing further remains for me to advise, than that you will persevere and bring to an happy Issue what you have so well begun.

And this I advise you, because you cannot safely entertain an Opinion, that what you have done hitherto is all the Duty required of you, for whilst God shall see fit to spare your Life, you must bewail your youthful Follies, and continually ask Pardon for them ; you must studiously fortify your Mind against any pleasing Remembrance of them, and arm yourself against all those Vices which chiefly and insensibly *steal* on upon Old Age, which are, amongst others, *Moroseness* and *Avarice*, *Peevishness*, and *an immoderate Love of Money*.

8th. *A Form to be used with a younger Person.*

YOung Men are accustomed, Brother, to promise themselves long Health, and very seldom entertain any serious Thoughts of Death : But that Sickness you now labour under may teach you that even those are not free from Diseases or secure from Death, and therefore such ought to

to live as if they were to die in a few Days, and will most certainly give an Account of all their Actions at a Time uncertain to them. Whether you have so lived, God knows, and your own Conscience; 'tis not my Province to accuse you, nor is it agreeable for me to do it: Yet I exhort you to recollect and call yourself to Account how you have behaved, and that you would sincerely beg Pardon of God for your past Sins with a truly contrite Heart, and that you would fortify your Mind against all those Sins for the future.

[Then let the Minister mention those Vices to which young Persons are mostly inclined, as Experience shews us.]

9th. *For One that is condemned to die.*

BRother, you are shortly to undergo a violent and scandalous Death, which, however, is attended with many Benefits, that seldom accompany a natural One. You foresee your own Dissolution, and now your Senses are entire, you can set about this momentous Work of Repentance, and prepare yourself properly for your approaching End. God grant that you may attempt or set about this with all your Might, in Proportion to the short Space that is allow-

ed you for it. Remember the Thief on the Cross obtained Salvation, because he seriously repented of all his evil Deeds, and do not doubt but you shall obtain Pardon of a most gracious God if your Repentance be true and sincere. If you hate the Sins which you have formerly committed, and are really sorry that you have offended and displeased God thereby; if you sincerely love God's Statutes, and with a serious Intention of recovering his Favour are firmly resolved to observe them all for the Time to come; if having humbly asked Forgiveness of God and Men, you have made Satisfaction to those whom you have injured to the best of your Power, restoring to them what you had unjustly taken, and labour to repair any Injuries done to the Public, by discovering the Partners of that Crime for which you are condemned to die; if you shall have faithfully performed these and other such like Duties, you will in great Measure wipe off that Disgrace thrown upon you, you will render God propitious, and may hope for everlasting Salvation, thro' the infinite Mercies of *Christ*, which else you have no Room to expect.

10th. *Form to be used when he visits a Stranger.*

BRother, beloved in *Christ*, you are an utter Stranger to me, nor do I know how you have spent the Days that are past, therefore, unless by your own Interrogatories and voluntary Confessions you furnish me with suitable Matter of Discourse, I can only give Advice in general: And now I shall prescribe no other than what I would gladly embrace myself if I was in your weak Condition.

I exhort, therefore, that you would look back upon your past Life, and weigh it in the *Balance of the Sanctuary*: Recall to your Memory, to the best of your Power, what Offences you have committed against God, your Neighbour, or yourself; consider how often you have repeated each Particular, and impartially weigh the aggravating Circumstances of their Guilt. Enquire diligently whether you committed those Offences deliberately, against the Advice of your Pastor, and the Remonstrances and Checks of your Conscience; and then consider seriously how foolish, base, and ungrateful it is to sin against the infinite Power and Goodness of God; and then heartily confess your Unworthiness

with all Humility, and humbly beg of God, that for the infinite Merits of his only Son he would forgive you all your past Offences, and imploring his Help against each of them, make firm and stedfast Resolutions to persist in your Duty; and for the more effectual performing of this, call in the Advice of some intimate and dear Friend, and beg him, by the sacred Tie of *antient* Friendship, and the Love of God, that he would now assist you, that he would refresh and rub up your Memory, as well by kindly admonishing you of the particular Faults he hath observed in your Conduct; as by rehearsing to you distinctly a Catalogue of Vices in general; that he would endeavour to increase your Piety, as well by his sober and frequent Conferences, as by reading the Holy Scriptures to you, and other Books, which either judiciously treat of your former Sins, or clearly explain the Nature, Necessity, and Power of Repentance, or the Four Last Things, *Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.*

To the Foregoing may be added other Forms, suited to particular Cases or Accidents; *e. gr.* If any One should receive a mortal Wound in a Duel, or should lay
violent

violent Hands upon himself, or should be in Danger of dying in Child-Bed, by having the Fœtus stifled in the Womb, or by any other Accident or Miscarriage.

The Minister should be prepared with these Forms of addressing the Sick; not that I would undervalue the Form prescribed in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick in the Book of Common-Prayer, for I am sensible the Whole is composed and drawn up with that Judgment and Piety as to excell' all Other that I have seen, and therefore I cannot hope to *equal*, much less *exceed* it, and would blame those who in general do not use it. “ And as Dr. DODWELL observes, “ in his late pious and judicious Treatise “ on this Subject, those few Collects provided in our Liturgy for this Service are “ so excellent a Pattern, that they are the “ happiest who can best imitate them, “ where particular Cases are there provided; for these Prayers claim and deserve “ the Preference both on Account of their “ Authority and their Excellency. The “ Use of all Devotions of this Kind are and “ must be discretionary, and much must “ after all be left to the Judgment of the “ prudent Pastor in the Application of “ them.

“ them. Different Forms will in this, as
 “ in all other Cases, more or less suit the
 “ Mind of different Persons, and when
 “ once Experience has taught us which
 “ Sort of Devotions seem most to affect the
 “ Sufferers whom we attend, and whom
 “ we desire to assist and improve, we shall
 “ need no other or better Direction in the
 “ Use of them.”

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 Let all who have the Care of Souls often
 advise the People committed to their Charge,
 in private Conference, or in their public
 Discourses, that every One take Care to
 send for the Pastor in the Beginning of his
 Sickness ; for when the Disorder increases,
 they are generally incapable of Advice,
 since the Mind is much affected with the
 Disorders of the Body. The People there-
 fore should be made duly sensible, that in
 their Sickness 'tis proper they should call
 in some Minister of God's Word in Season,
 for that their Prayers and Counsel do not
 hasten Death, (which is too commonly,
 tho' foolishly imagined,) but by promoting
 true Repentance, are the Means, under
 God, of removing the Disorder, and of
 prolonging their Lives. And Men are
 therefore

therefore the more earnestly to be persuaded to send for their Pastor in the Time of Sickness: Because many, especially of the *poorer* Sort,¹ refrain from calling in the Assistance of their Minister, for Fear they should be impertinent and troublesome.

But because it sometimes happens, that thro' the Fault of the sick Man, or Negligence of his Friends, the Minister is not sent for in Season; it is his bounden Duty to make very frequent Inquiries about the Health and Welfare of his Flock, and to give Orders to the Parish Clark or Sexton, or Door-keeper, to acquaint him with the Sickness of his Parishioners; and when he knows of any One's Illness, to go to him voluntarily, without being sent for, since he ought to embrace all Occasions of doing Good to his Flock, and to catch every proper Season of Address, some of which generally attend a State of Sickness. None therefore who has the Care of Souls will shun this Work and Labour of Love; because his Parishioners are obliged to send for him when sick, according to St. James's Direction, C. v. 14. *If any One among you is sick, let him send for the Elders of the Church, that they may pray over him; or*
from

from a Fear that if he should intrude himself voluntarily and abruptly, his Visit would not be welcome and acceptable, and he should defeat the good Intention of it to the sick Person: Nay, that he may not seem to feign Excuses, or seek a Pretence for his Laziness, at least he will pay a single Visit to the Sick of his own Accord; and if he shall perceive that he is not welcome, nor likely to do any Good with the sick Person, then the Minister may stay away without any Mark of Infamy or Negligence of the Sick.

Hitherto we have shewn how the Pastor or Curate ought to be furnished or provided himself, to enable him to set about this important Work of visiting the Sick, and perform it with Prudence and Advantage; I shall now proceed to shew what Duties he ought to perform towards the sick Patients themselves, in the Course of his Visitation.—And they are these which follow.



CLASS II.

C L A S S II.

Touching those Things which are necessary to be performed to the sick Persons themselves, in the Course of the Visitation.

THE Minister ought, when he comes first to the sick Person, to shew his Sympathy and Concern for him by his Words, and affectionately to ask him about the Nature of his Sickness, of its Symptoms, and how long it has continued upon him; for as these are Marks of Love and Benevolence, so they will render his Counsel and Advice the more acceptable.

The Minister or Pastor will then hint, that he hopes the sick Man will submit his Will to the Divine Will, and, as it becomes a dutiful Child, that he will patiently bear the Correction of his Heavenly Father, which, altho' it may seem heavy, yet is far beneath his Deserts; and though it is commonly reckoned amongst Calamities, yet it will turn to his Good, if he shall bear it with a calm and steady Mind; which, finally, (as all other Afflictions are) is sent by God to prove and exercise his Patience. He may moreover add, that Impatience will not relieve, but aggravate the Evil; for all Misery is the more galling to
D every

every One, in Proportion as he bears it with an unwilling Mind.

The Minister will next inform the Patient that the Event of Sickneſs is very uncertain, and therefore that he ſhould not ſo deſpair of Recovery, as to caſt off all Care of his Body, or flight and deſpiſe thoſe Medicines which might remove the Evil; nor, on the contrary, entertain ſuch Hopes, as to preſume to promiſe himſelf another Season of Repentance, or think it ſafe to put off *that one Thing needful*, the Care of the Soul, even for a *Day*.

Next let him fall upon his Knees and pray to God for the Sick, according to the Form preſcribed in the Liturgy; and then riſing from Prayers, let him proceed, after ſome ſhort Interval, to that Addreſs in the Book of Common-Prayer, or if he thinks proper, to ſome other Form, ſuch as we have deſcribed above.

Having ended his general Addreſs, let him ſhew how impoſſible it is to pleaſe God without *Faith* *, and therefore how nearly it concerns every Perſon to give Proof
of

* But here it muſt be noted, that Faith in the Scriptures, on which ſo great a Streſs is laid, is not only a firm Belief of the Being of God, and of all the fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Religion, but is at the ſame Time a vital operative Principle, which purifieth the Heart, and is productive of Good Works.

of his Faith, and to enquire into the Truth and Sincerity of it.

And for this good Purpose, let the Minister rehearse clearly and distinctly all the Articles of the Apostles Creed or Christian Faith, and according to the Direction of our Church, examine the sick Person in each Article, whether he heartily assents to it, and if he finds him wavering in any one of them, let him endeavour to confirm and strengthen him in the Belief of it.

Amongst the Articles of our Faith some are so fundamental, that Persons can't be wholly ignorant of them, or doubt of their Truth, without Hazard of their Salvation. Therefore as to those, the Pastor must at least endeavour that the sick Man visited should rightly understand them, and yield a firm and hearty Assent to them; nor let him insist lightly upon this Topic with any One, because he has been a constant Frequenter of the Church for a long Space of Time. For it often arises from the Want of seasonable Instruction, that many Persons, of an advanced Age, neither understand Things necessary to be known, nor assent to those which are necessary to be believed.

But perhaps it will be prudent and convenient to take other Steps with those who have more Skill and Judgment, or think well of themselves; and if they seem to want any clearer or more explicit Knowledge of the Articles of Faith, to treat them according to the wise Rules of *John Polance*, in order to give them a clearer Perception of them, either by Way of Recommendation, or Oblation, or Prayer, or by Thanksgivings, or raising their Hopes and Expectations, *viz.* By admonishing the sick Person that he would recommend himself to the ever-blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the Pastor dictating for him: To the Father, as the Creator of all Things, Visible and Invisible; to the Son, as proceeding from the Father by eternal and ineffable Generation, as being sent into the World in Time for the Salvation of all Men, as being conceived by the Power of the Holy Ghost, and born Man of the Virgin Mary, as having suffered, been dead and buried, risen again, and ascended into Heaven, as sitting there at the Right Hand of God, and at length to come to judge the Quick and the Dead, and to render to every One according to his Works, either eternal Life, or eternal Misery :

fery : And, lastly, that he recommend himself to the Holy Ghost, as proceeding from the Father and the Son, and enlivening the one Holy and Catholick Church.

Let the Sick be instructed, I say, (the Form being varied according to the Occasion;) at one Time to recommend themselves to them, at another to offer themselves unto them, sometimes to entreat them, and then to give Thanks to them, and sometimes to place their Hopes in them, always recapitulating or making exprefs Mention of the Mysteries of our Holy Faith, as contained in the Scriptures, upon every Occasion.

Next the Pastor must point out the Necessity of true Repentance, and convince the sick Person, by Arguments drawn from Scripture, that this will render the greatest Sinners capable of the Divine Mercy. And because it is much to be suspected that most Persons are ignorant of the *Nature* of true Repentance, it must be most carefully explained, and the greatest Part of sick Persons should be instructed, that true Repentance is a resolved Conversion of Mind, from Evil to Good, founded in the Love of God, and manifested by a careful avoiding of every Vice,

Vice, and by a diligent and steady Practice of all Christian Virtues. Next he will exhort them to an accurate and strict Examination of their past Life, and plainly and affectionately shew them how necessary this is to beget true Repentance. And for the better Performance of this, he will advise the sick Person to read over with Attention some Catalogue of Sins, or give earnest Heed to another Person who shall distinctly rehearse it to him; and in respect to any Vice, to consider seriously with himself whether he has committed such an Offence at any Time; for it is not safe or adviseable for any Person, in a Matter of such vast Moment, to trust wholly to his own Memory, and despise outward Means and Assistance: It will be therefore incumbent upon every faithful Minister of *Christ*, often to admonish the sick Man of this, and also to assist him to the Best of his Power, by repeating to him the Decalogue or ten Commandments, and strictly and accurately remarking to him the Sins they forbid; and I should prefer this latter Method to the former, in numberless Cases almost; because this will teach every common and ordinary Person the easiest Way of Self-Examination, and a Method which he can use

use at his Leisure, when he is deprived of all other Human Assistance. The Minister will likewise advise and exhort the sick Penitent to look into the general and particular State of his Soul, that he may see his Offences, together with their several Aggravations. And because the End and Design of this Inquiry is no other than to humble his Mind before God; than to make him hate and lament his former beloved Vices, and implore the Divine Mercy and Forgiveness, and to induce him to resolve against the like Errors for the Future: Let him therefore exhort the sick Person immediately thereupon to own his Unworthiness, and most humbly confess and bewail his past Sins, that he may obtain Pardon of God for them; and lastly, firmly to resolve with himself to abstain from all such for the future, to the best of his Power.— And because it will unavoidably happen, after the most accurate Search, that some Faults will lie conceal'd, let the Pastor also admonish him to beg of God with the Psalmist, *to be purged and cleansed from his secret or hidden Faults.*

And if the Visitor shall know of any Crimes which the sick man has indulged himself

himself in in his Health, when the Company is retired, expressing his Love for him, let him discourse in particular of those, and let him stir up the guilty Man's Resolutions against every particular Crime.

Let him also acquaint him with the Means, as well as the End of such Resolutions, and let him advise him in the most friendly Manner, never to forget, but to adhere firmly to his Purpose of pursuing those Measures which tend to establish his wise Intentions, and carefully shun those which are apt to weaken and unbend them; for he that neglects the one, or indulges the other, has no more Reason to hope that he shall attain his Purpose, than that Man has to expect he shall become Learned, who never applies himself to the Study of Letters.

The Pastor ought likewise to mention those Things which manifestly tend to make us stedfast and resolute in Piety and a good Life: Such are right Apprehensions of God, just Notions of the Nature of Virtues and Vices, and frequent Meditation of Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; Diligence in our Callings, frequent Prayer, and the Society of good Men; a religious
Adherence

Adherence to all our innocent Purposes, though about Things of less Importance, and a daily renewing of all our holy and good Resolutions. It will do us much Good also to observe carefully those Things which are apt to lead us into any Crimes, of which Sort are Idleness, the Conversation of wicked Men, that wavering and instability of Mind, whereby we fall off from our innocent Purposes without Scruple, and that rash Presumption by which we throw ourselves into Dangers, and needlessly rush into those Temptations which we ought to shun with the utmost Caution.

In the next Place let the Pastor exhort and earnestly persuade him to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and prepare himself accordingly, and get some of his Friends to receive with him. Let the Minister enquire of the Sick whether he has ever received the Sacrament before. For if this is the first Time, the Nature, Necessity, and Efficacy of it ought to be explained to him, and he ought to be fully instructed in what Manner he may best prepare himself for a due Reception of "this Feast of Love and Charity." In the next Place, let him at large persuade him to make Restitution to his Neighbour for any

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Injuries

Injuries and Wrongs he has done him; for as most People think least of those Things in Time of Health, therefore it is the more needful to admonish them thereof in their Sickness, and at the same Time to acquaint them what Satisfaction they ought to make for every Kind and Degree of Injuries. And in order to induce the sick Penitent to restore his ill-gotten Goods the more willingly, let it be recommended to his serious Consideration that all Things will in a short Time be taken from him, and especially ill-gotten Things will shamefully vanish away, that they will not prove lasting to his Heirs and Successors; nay, will rather entail a Curse upon them, and expose them to eternal Damnation; and though they should greatly profit them without any Hazard of future Mischiefs, yet it favours of the greatest Folly and Madness for a Man to expose himself to endless Miseries, that any ungrateful Heirs may enjoy a fleeting transitory Pleasure.

And since there can be no greater Injury than what is done to the Souls of our Neighbours, when they are tempted to commit any Evil; with respect to the Reparation necessary in such Cases, the Pastor ought to say something particular; and the
sick

sick Man should be stirred up to exhort those whom he has by any Means enticed or drawn into Sin, to a steady and sincere Repentance; and to do what lies in his Power to bring them to it. Let the Minister therefore advise him, that if they live near him, he would send privately to, and confer with them; or, if they are at a Distance, that he would signify to them by Letter, or some faithful Friend, that by God's Fatherly Correction he is happily restored to a better Mind; that he now thoroughly hates all the Impieties of his past Life, and now grieves, from his Soul, not only that he ever rashly committed them, but that he ever tempted *Them* to be Partakers in his Guilt; that he now begs and seriously entreats *Them*, that they would consult and provide for their eternal Salvation in Time; that they would at length renounce all their Sins, and especially those to which he had either induced them, by his bad Example, bad Counsels, or any other vile Persuasion; that he is fully convinced of the Malignity and huge Danger of them, and is also duly persuaded that he must give an Account to God not only for his *own* Offences, but also those of *others*, which were committed by the In-

fluence of his bad Conversation, and therefore that he cannot depart this Life with a quiet Mind or Conscience, unless with his last Breath he should first exhort them to a seasonable Repentance and Amendment, and, as far as lay in his Power, secure them from that Death due to their Crimes, and render them capable of a better Life. And since the Generality of Mankind partake of other Men's Sins in some Respect or other, at least by the Neglect of giving them friendly Correeption or Reproof; it becomes all, *especially those* whose Dissolution draweth near, to exhort all those who visit them to true Repentance, and the serious Practice of Piety in general; and indeed to make this general Satisfaction for that general Injury, which flows from such Neglect, all Persons who are dangerously ill may be very properly admonished.

The Curate or Minister should also admonish the sick Person not only to ask Pardon for his own Offences from Men, but also to forgive those who have offended him, and shew what Sort of Forgiveness is necessary, that he may obtain Forgiveness at the Hands of God. For some being exhorted to forgive their Debtors in general, entertain false and dangerous Notions of
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this Matter, and think they have done enough, if they declare their Forgiveness of them in Words, though in the mean Time there lurks a secret Resolution within their Breast of taking their Revenge if they shall recover, and ever have it in their Power : On the other Hand, others think they must even recede from their Right, and so blot out the Memory of Affronts from their Mind, as never to think of them afterwards, if they would forgive their offending Brethren, as required.

The Pastor may sometimes add other Prayers to those appointed in the publick Liturgy, as he shall judge expedient to the State of the Sick, and thereby he will prudently instruct the sick Person, and those who attend and are with him, in the respective Duties required of them upon the Occasion, by praying to God expressly, that they may all and each of them perform those Things, which at that Juncture are required of them all.

If Death seems to be nearly approaching, he must fortify the Mind of the Sick against all unreasonable Fears of Death ; and It should be represented to him as the End of all his Troubles, and the Gate that will
bring

bring all those to eternal Happiness, who give sincere Tokens of true Repentance.

As to Those, the Sincerity of whose Repentance there is no just Reason to doubt of, the Minister may pronounce Absolution upon them, if they earnestly desire it. And to prevent any Misconception, the Nature of it ought generally to be explain'd. And (accordingly) it may be represented as Absolute (and Compleat) with respect to those Offences, which have given Scandal to the Church. And with regard to all others, as Authoritative, and such as by the Grace of God will be effectual to Those who are sincere Penitents.

He who has the Cure of Souls, should always remember, that sick Persons must be differently dealt with, according to their various Tempers and Dispositions; for to those who have entertained ill-grounded Hopes of future Happiness, the Justice of God should be explained, and those heavy Threatnings which God has denounced against all Sin and Wickedness are to be warmly inculcated, and the Terrors of a future Judgment, and the Pains of Hell, are to be represented in the liveliest Manner possible. But as to the sick Person,
who

who is of a truly contrite Spirit, and groans under the heavy Burthen of his Sins, *his* Mind must be soothed with some sweet Conference concerning God's Mercy ; and those Places of Scripture are to be explained for his Comfort, in which God promises Pardon to truly penitent Sinners. Let his Memory be refreshed with the *Merits* of his *Saviour*, let him be encouraged to place his Hope in *them*, and to be calm and composed. “ And here let such Treasures be recommended to his Perusal, as will best supply him with those Passages of Scripture, which are applicable to his present Condition and Circumstances.”

If the sick Person visited be a Parent, he must be exhorted to bless and give religious Advice to his Children, especially if he is near Death ; for the Counsels of a dying Parent will make a deeper Impression upon the Minds of his Children, and will avail more with them than his Advice in Time of Health. If a Servant be visited, let him be moved to discover if he knows any Plots or bad Designs of his fellow Servants, entered into against the Interest of his Master or Mistress. If the Person be poor, and wants Necessaries, the Minister ought to relieve him to the best of his Power,
and

and either give him some of his own Money, or, if he cannot afford it, beg some of the Rich, who are better able to assist him.

Let the Minister exhort the sick Person when Necessity requires it, to settle and dispose his Worldly Affairs; lest they being unsettled, should disturb his Mind, and withdraw it from Things of greater Concern; or lest he should die before they are adjusted, and thence his Survivors should be plagued with Quarrels and Law-Suits. And if he abounds with Riches, he should earnestly press and exhort him to Works of Charity, by Motives drawn from the last Day of Judgment, when this Argument will be particularly insisted upon, and our eternal Fate will be chiefly determined by the Observance or Neglect of Mercy and Charity.

Let it be observed, that these Exhortations are not to be used all at one Time; as well because this would tire the Patient, and because he ought to vary his Counsels, as often as he visits the Sick, lest he should always seem to speak in the same Tone, and should be condemned of Ignorance by the Standers by, as if he had not Understanding enough to vary his Discourse.

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When the Pastor has ended his Prayer and Exhortation, let him kindly interrogate the Patient concerning the State of his Body, and in a friendly Manner enquire about the Medicines which he has used ; and if he has Skill in Physic, (unless the Physician be present) let him give his own Advice, for by these Means he will make himself more beloved.

Finally, when the Minister is about to withdraw, he will exhort the Sick to meditate privately on those Things he has heard from him, he will urge him to follow his Advice, he will wish him Health, and pray to God to assist him with his Grace, that the sick Man may be able and willing to behave himself suitable to his present Circumstances.

C L A S S III.

The Pastor will have an Eye to those Admonitions which respect the Attendants of the Sick.

IT is oftentimes expedient that the Evangelical Pastor or Minister should employ the Assistance of the sick Man's Friends in promoting his eternal Salvation. For he will be able to do a good deal with him, if he can prevail upon those to assist him in earnest, who are nearly related to him

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by Blood or Friendship; and therefore calling them privately to him, he will address them in this Manner :

“ I praise and commend you for the great Care you take of your sick Friend. I beseech you to add the Care of his Soul to that of his Body : for this is by far the more *excellent Part*, and deserves the greater Care. In this therefore be especially diligent that his Mind may be sound and whole, for by these Means you will best testify your Love, and do him the most signal Service. Take Care therefore in the first Place, that his Mind be not diverted from serious Things, either by the impertinent Discourses, or the unseemly Behaviour of those who visit him.

“ Cherish and kindle as much as you can those pious Thoughts, which I have excited in his Breast ; read to him, when convenient, plainly and distinctly, this or that Catalogue of Sins, and in the Course of Reading, dwell most and longest upon those Vices to which you have known your Friend to be most addicted, either by Nature or evil Habit. At other Times you may read DAVID'S Penitential Psalms, or those Pages of Holy Scripture which you think will be most beneficial to him in his
present

present Circumstances. Read also to him some particular Parts of any good Book which may be applicable to his own Case, for I think that by so doing you will be very serviceable to your Friend. I will visit him often, but since I cannot be always with him, it is your Duty to supply my Place in advising and comforting him in the Manner I have recommended.

“ You will naturally expect the same Kindness from others if ever you should be seized with any dangerous Sickness which threatens your Life. Whatsoever you would that others should do unto you, never grudge to do the same to them.”

Those who attend the Sick should be also admonished to check and moderate their Grief, since it is vain and useless; and is therefore contrary to right Reason, because it does no real Good; that it will be also impious and displeasing to God if indulged too far; that, howsoever God may forgive it when it steals upon us by Surprise; yet that excessive Grief can never be indulged without opposing the *sovereign Authority* of God. They should be therefore admonished to direct their best Endeavours to this End, that they may conform

form and submit their Wills in all Things to the Divine Will.

In order to prepare them the better against the Death of their Friend, who is in apparent Danger, they should be told further how fleeting and uncertain this present Life is, how base it is to refuse that Lot which is common to all Men, and either to be averse to their own Death, or greatly to lament that of others, since we were all born upon this Condition, to leave this World when God commands ; that if our Friend whom we now bewail with unprofitable Sorrow should go the common Way of Mankind, we shall all follow him soon, and remain together with him for ever, unless distinct Mansions shall be assigned to Us, upon Account of the Difference of our Conduct and Behaviour here Below.

Finally, they may be assured, that the best Love and truest Affection they can shew to those who are dead, is by a faithful Discharge of those Things which they left them to execute in their last Moments, rather than by idle Tears and useless Grief or Mourning : And if the Minister cannot by those directions prevail upon the Attendants on the Sick either to banish Sorrow,

or

or greatly lessen it, yet let him admonish them, that at least they ought to conceal their Grief in Presence of the sick Man, lest by unreasonable Sorrow they should disturb his Mind, and thereby render him less capable of taking the proper Care of his Soul.

Moreover, he should make strict Enquiry of those who attend the Sick, of his Age, State of Life, Learning, Morals, and other Circumstances, not known to him. For the Minister, having this previous Information, when he comes next to visit the Sick, will be able to address him more properly, and in a Manner more suitable to his particular Case. Let him ask his Physician likewise whether he thinks him near Death; and advise him, if he perceives any Symptoms of its Approach, not to conceal them from the sick Person, or those who attend him; lest being deceived with the false Hope of Recovery, he should foolishly put off the necessary Care of his Soul, and those who attend should be deficient in those Offices, which 'tis their Duty to perform to their Friend in his last Extremity.

If the sick Patient (which often happens) should, by a Phrensy, or some short Delirium, not be able to admit any Counsel or
Advice,

Advice, let the Minister admonish the Friends present what he would have them say to him when he comes to his Senses again: Let him order them also to send for him as soon as ever they shall perceive that the sick Person is capable of receiving wholesome Counsel or Advice.

If the excessive Fondness and Tenderness of Friends and Relations should hinder the Sick from thinking on his approaching End with Calmness and Composure of Mind, and chearfully preparing himself to undergo the Shock; let the Minister advise those who are obliged to attend him, that they would not suffer those earthly Passions to be raised either by the unnecessary Presence of Wife or Children, or any other near and dear Relation; or any unseasonable Mention of them: And also suggest such Reasons to them as are proper to keep away the Relations, if they should be too frequent in their Visits, and too importunate to be admitted to see their departing Friend.

CLASS IV.

What Rules the Pastor ought to prescribe to those who do not belong to his Flock.

THE Minister of God's Word, the better he knows the Person he is to visit,

visit, will be able to address him with the greater Propriety, and more seasonably apply those Passages of Scripture which belong to his Case. But he will sometimes be obliged to visit those who are quite Strangers to him; and in this Case it is necessary he should confine himself to Generals, and use some premeditated Form of Prayer, which may justly suit any Stranger, of any Condition, such as we have mentioned above, under the first Class, or Head of Discourse.

If the Minister can fish out any Thing of his former Course of Life, by his Answers, he will treat of those in particular; he will commend the good Part of his Conduct, and blame the vicious; and then he will inform him how culpable and noxious the latter was, and how displeasing to God; and will moreover acquaint him by what Means such Behaviour may be guarded against, and prevented for the future.

But if nothing can be collected from the Answers of the sick Person as to his former Way of Life, the prudent Pastor will make some Conjecture from his Age and Calling, and the Place in which he lived when in Health; for certain Vices are peculiar to every Age, State, and Climate. And I would

would advise the Minister to discourse particularly of those Vices to which he suspects the Patient has been most prone and inclinable.

He ought to signify to him, however, at the End of his Prayer, that he does not upbraid him with those Sins which he mentions, for he does not know whether he ever committed them; but he only mentioned them to him, that he might assist him in recollecting his Faults; and that it must be ascribed to the good Providence of God, if, while he was acquainted with none that he could charge him with, he should by these Means seasonably recall any *secret Sin* to his Memory.

The Minister should then add, that it does not much signify what *Men* think of him, provided, by making a fair and sincere Confession of his Sins to *God*, and being *truly penitent* for them, he shall be considered as innocent in the Sight of *God*.

Next, in order to give the sick Person *greater Assurance*, and make him the more willing to reveal the secret Disorders of his Mind as to a faithful Physician, it is the Minister's Duty to declare positively, that he is bound by his Office both to conceal whatever is committed to him, under
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the Seal of private Confession, and to afford him the best Counsel he can ; nor is it of any Consequence whether the Person be a Stranger or not, who asks his Advice, since 'tis desired of One, who, by Virtue of his Office, is obliged to assist *all*, without *Respect of Persons*, with his salutary & comfortable Advice, who stand in Need of it.

But if the Person visited shall discover his secret Faults with more Reserve than he ought, tho' the Minister has promised Secrecy and good Counsel, let him be admonished to call in some other Minister of God's Word, on whom he imagines he may more safely depend. For the Pastor, if by this Admonition he cannot get himself to be believed and trusted, will at least remove the Suspicion, which else the sick Person might entertain of him, that he pries too closely into other Men's Affairs.

As to other Things which may be said to Strangers in the Course of his Visitation, and what Prayers are to be offered up for them, every Minister who is employed in this *important* Duty may learn from his own Discretion, and the Rules laid down in the second Class of Directions.

CLASS V.

Relates to those who are troubled in Mind.

IT sometimes happens that the Evangelical Pastor has to do with those who are perplexed with various Troubles and Anxieties, and when he is sent for to a Person in that sad Condition, let him endeavour in the first Place to discover the true and real Causes of this Anguish; and to this End let him urge the sick Man to a particular Confession of his Sins: Let him question others concerning his past Life, and learn from his *Attendants* how he reasons and discourses about Worldly Matters. From hence he may form just Sentiments, whether that Trouble of Mind arises from a Disorder of the Brain, or Hurry of the Animal Spirits; or whether it may be ascribed to a wounded or guilty Conscience? If it arises from the former Cause, let him admonish the sick Man to call in the Help of the Physicians, for 'tis their Province to heal Disorders of this Kind: He may then give him Hopes that he will soon return to his former Peace of Mind, if he regularly observes the Prescriptions of the Physicians; and he may then assure him, that God will hereafter pass Sentence on him, not according to the depraved Conceptions of a sick Man,

Man, but according to his moral Conduct whilst in Health and acting freely ; which can be no Secret to God, unto whom all Things are naked and open.

He may, for the immediate Comfort of the dejected Man's Mind, and the Benefit of those who are present, discourse of the infinite Mercy of God ; for Discourses of this Sort, tho' they cannot heal the disordered Brain, yet may calm the Affections, and compose them a little for the present.

To the Forms of Prayers prescribed in our Liturgy may be added others, discreetly applied to this present Case ; for as to the short Prayer in the Office of visiting the Sick, which is to be addressed for those who are troubled in Mind, it cannot be admitted here, nor can it be *accommodated*, unless to those who are galled with a sharp Sense of their heinous Crimes.

If that Torment of Mind shall flow from the Consciousness of an ill-spent Life, then the Pastor must enquire what those Sins are which harraßs and trouble him so ; for while they are concealed, no Remedies will benefit ; the Grief may be sooth'd, but Experience shews us it cannot be entirely removed.

When these Facts are known, we must use great Caution in administering Com-

fort. For it will do him more Good who has been a long Time devoted to Sin, or has committed some grievous Crime with his Eyes open, to have his Grief and Fear of Punishment increased, than to have it lessened ; and it will be profitable for such an Offender to lie for some Time under the Smart of his own Conscience.

The Minister, therefore, if he is called in to such a Person, will exaggerate the Heinousness of his Crimes, will relate the tremendous Threatnings of God denounced against impenitent Sinners, and those eternal Punishments which await the Wicked in the other World ; he will represent those Things to the Offender in the best Manner he can ; but if he shall perceive any Signs of true Repentance, or is afraid the sick Man will fall into Despair, he will not leave him before he has in some Measure revived his Hopes, by telling him the Mercy of God is infinite, and proving from the Scriptures, that God is able and willing to pardon the greatest Sinners, provided they truly repent ; that Christ merited the Favour of God for such, and henceforth those who forsake their Sins have no Reason to fear, if they keep the Command-
ments

ments of God, and faithfully walk according to them.

He who grieves much, and is greatly dejected or cast down in his Mind, because thro' Human Frailty he has fallen into some lesser Sins, ought to be comforted immediately ; and to such the Pastor will apply in this wise : " That the Promises of Christ were freely made to us ; that the Mercy of God, and the Merits of Christ, are sufficient to procure Remission for Sins of the *deepest Dye*, much more for those *small Ones* which sometimes *insensibly* attend the *best* of Men." He ought to acquaint such a One that God knows the Frailty of his Nature, nor does he expect him to attain that Perfection in this Life, which the Blessed obtain in Heaven ; that it is enough if he takes due Care to avoid the greater Crimes, and also opposes, to the best of his Strength and Ability, those smaller Offences, as far as the Infirmary of his Nature will give Leave.

I knew a certain Person, of a blameless Life, who was strangely afflicted because she had not grieved sufficiently for her Sins : With respect to Persons of this Stamp, when you visit them, be sure to acquaint them, that tho' Grief is commendable, and leads to Repentance, yet *that* is not *absolutely*

lutely necessary to constitute a true Penitent ; that a settled Hatred of Sin is sufficient ; that that sensible or passionate Grief depends upon the Temper and Habit of the Body, nor is it in every One's Power ; that it is seldom raised by slight Offences ; and that if the Want of so great a Degree of Sorrow is to be reckon'd amongst our Mis-carriages, such a One is not deficient on that Score, who is truly sorry upon that very Account, because he is not more sorry for his Sins.

The Troubles with which sick Persons are wont to wear out themselves, often arise from some false Notions of God, and therefore it is the Minister's Duty, when he attends any sick Person, in order to alleviate and calm his troubled Mind, diligently to examine, whether he entertains right or wrong Notions of God, and his Attributes or Perfections ; and if he shall discover that he is fallen into some dangerous Error which discomposes him, by any natural Defect in his Understanding, or a bad Education, or an incautious Reading of Books stuffed with erroneous Opinions ; then he should teach him right Sentiments, and refer him to judicious Authors for fuller Instruction ; for whilst the sick Man
hugs

hugs his Error, the Pastor cannot easily relieve or compose that Trouble of Mind, which arises from thence.

The Pastor should carefully distinguish between Despair, which is really a Sin, and that Want of Hope which may properly be called Misery. The former confines the infinite Mercy of God within too narrow Bounds, and alledges, not less impiously than unjustly, that it is out of the Power of God to pardon some Sins, and therefore 'tis no Wonder if it be reckoned by him who harbours it in his last Illness among those heinous Sins which shall never be forgiven; but as to the latter, since it agrees with a true and just Acknowledgment of the Immensity of the Divine Mercy; and they who labour under it do not imagine that God *cannot*, but that he *will* not pardon their *greater Crimes*: And since they are so persuaded, not that the Mercy of God is insufficient to pardon any Sins of Mankind, but because they think their Sins have render'd them incapable of Mercy; the State of *such Persons* deserves rather our *Pity* than *Blame*. And as it is our Duty to explain the boundless Clemency of God to those who are afflicted with the former Despair, so we must recommend that Philanthropy to the latter, whereby
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he exhorts Sinners to Repentance, and is willing to bestow on them everlasting Salvation. Let him remind them of those Failings of the godly and pious, which are mentioned in Scripture, and let the Pastor shew them, that he does not doubt but, if they in earnest set about true Repentance, they will hereafter obtain that Salvation which they now seem to despair of.

As to those particular Cases of Conscience which are wont to disturb the Minds of sick Persons, the Determination of *them* must be left to the Minister's Prudence and Discretion; for since they are numberless, no prudent Man will presume or take upon him to give a Detail of them, much less to give Directions of a proper Application to each of them. But let the Pastors carefully remember these two Considerations, that in all doubtful Cases they ought to follow the safest Side, and where there are the least and fewest Inconveniencies: and having thoroughly weighed the Doubt and Scruple of Conscience, they ought first to consult the most approved Writers of Casuistical Divinity, "such as Bishop *Sander-son's* Prælections, Bishop *Taylor's* Ductor Dubitantium, Archbp. *Sharp's* Sermons on Conscience, *Placete's* Christian Casuist, &c. before they presume to untie any knot-
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ty or difficult Point of Conscience, nor should they be ashamed to defer the Solution or explaining this Difficulty some little Time longer. For if any Pastor should mistake in his Decision of the Point, such a Resolution will tend to the Hurt of the sick Patient, and to his own Shame and Disgrace.

CLASS VI.

What Methods we must take towards those who begin to recover.

THE Pastor should not lay aside all Care of the sick Person when he first begins to recover, but to the End, that the Vows he made in his dangerous Situation may be more firmly rooted in his Mind; it is the Duty of a good Pastor to refresh his Memory as to those Promises, and earnestly instruct him, how indecent and how dangerous it is to violate his plighted Faith to God, and how ungrateful it is, after so many and great Mercies received from God, to relapse or fall back again into those Sins which are so odious and offensive to him. Let him remind him, upon this Occasion, that God Almighty can, whenever he pleases, in-

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flit greater Evils than those he has removed; and that his Patience, when highly abused, is often turned into Anger, and therefore it is to be feared that some heavy Avenger behind may severely punish him, if he should dare fall off from his Vows and Promises, and abuse the Lenity and Forbearance of God.

Let him therefore exhort the Penitent to remember his holy Vows, and think of them every Day, that he may often renew them, and continually implore or beg the Divine Grace, that he may effectually fulfill them. And the Visitor or Minister should not leave the sick Man before he has obtained Leave of putting him in Mind of those Things, if he shall at any Time find him unmindful of them, and in Danger of falling back again shamefully into those former Sins which he had resolved against; for having got this Leave, he will have it in his Power, whenever it is necessary, without any Offence, to use brotherly Correction or Reproof, (so useful to Mens Souls, and yet so unfashionable) and by a seasonable Use of it to restore this wandering Sheep into the right Way: Nor is any Admonition more efficacious, or more acceptable

ceptable, than that which is introduced with so much Friendship, and having the Person's previous Consent for making such an Application.

Let the Minister also earnestly persuade the Person who is about to recover, that he would propose to himself a certain Scheme of Life, and fix certain stated Times for every Part of his Duty, for the Return of those Seasons will admonish him when each respective Duty must be done, and will strongly incite him to a due Performance of them. For without proposing some good End, we shall never persevere stedfastly in our Duty, or ever make any regular Progress in the Christian Life. Therefore let the Pastor admonish the recovering Person that, for the Remainder of his Life, he would resolve to follow some regular Method, as follows, *viz.* That early in the Morning he would heartily thank God that he has escaped the Dangers of the Night, and is preserved in Safety to the present Day; that he would pray to God with all Humility to protect him from all those Evils which may assault and hurt his Soul or his Body; and that he would piously and sincerely renew those Vows of holy Living

which he had formerly begun ; that he would seriously consider with himself what Things that Day are likely to promote or wound his Virtue, that he would resolve to encourage the one and manfully avoid the other. And that upon every ordinary Day he would diligently follow the Works of his Calling, and would carefully avoid those Sins, which others are wont to commit, of the same Profession ; that he would be frequent in Prayer ; and if through a Multiplicity of Business he cannot conveniently attend the Church on Holy Days, at least that he will pour out his Soul in Ejaculations to God, that he would exercise the Works of Justice and Mercy to the best of his Power. That when he is invited to full and splendid Entertainments he would always keep himself within due Bounds of Temperance, and endeavour to suppress all lewd and vicious Thoughts, that he may place a strict Guard over his Appetites, that they may not carry him over the Fences of Religion and Duty. That he would close every Day with impartially recollecting what he has done well or ill, giving God Thanks for the one, and earnestly imploring his Pardon for the other ; and at last begging the Divine Protection
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against any Evils or Assaults in the Night, to the Hurt of his Soul or Body. That in every Week he would devote some particular Day for Fasting, Prayer, or pious Meditations, and Self - Examination into his past Life. That upon that Day at least he may regard the Care of his Soul, and severely examine his past Life in the Balance of Sanctity. That he would note his more grievous Sins, and the Occasions of them, and write them in a Book, that they may not slip his Memory. That every Sunday he would frequent his own Parish Church, and would devoutly attend all the Holy Offices that are performed in the House of God ; and when he returns from the public Assembly of the Faithful, he would avoid those Relaxations or Amusements which may be a Hindrance to his own Piety, or give Offence to others. That he would devote the Remainder of the Lord's Day to Prayers, to reading the Scriptures, holy Meditations, useful Conferences, Instruction of his Children and Servants, and such Kind of Duties. That he would adapt himself and conform to other Festivals of the Church, and the pious Institutions of his Superiors in the best Manner he can, and putting off all unnecessary

cessary Business to another Time, he would celebrate the Praises of God, especially for those Benefits which he can at that Time call to Mind, both in public and private, and would imitate the Virtues of those in whose Memory the Church appointed the Festival. And that upon Days set apart for Fasting and public Humiliation, he would abate somewhat of his usual Pleasures and Satisfactions, would confess his Unworthiness, and deprecate with all Humility those Evils, which his own, or the Sins of the Public have most justly deserved. And, in a Word, that upon those and all other Days of his Life, he would remember to meditate on Death, Judgment, and Heaven, and the Pains of Hell.

CLASS VII.

Treats of those who are Young, and not arrived to the State of Manhood.

IT may often happen that the Minister is sent for to those who, on Account of their tender Age, are neither capable of Sin or Counsel; and though this Part of his Office may seem needless and unprofitable, yet, should he be sent for even to such, it is his Duty to attend them, lest he should offend

offend those who beg his Assistance, or be reported to omit or slight his Duty, thro' Sloth or Negligence. And although in the Course of visiting such young Persons nothing more is required, than devoutly to read the public Prayers in the Liturgy, and to add such other short Forms as his Piety and Prudence shall direct him, suitable to the Infant State of the Sick, or the Circumstances of his Parents; and that he effectually comfort the Parents, and exhort them to bear calmly the Death of their Child, if he should die, by telling them, that they may be assured of his eternal Salvation if he departed this Life before he had committed any actual Sin, that this ought to be reckoned amongst the greatest Degrees of Happiness, if any one capable and certain of future Blessedness is, by the Favour of God, removed from the Troubles of this Life, and those numberless Dangers which bring so much Grief to the Soul and Body, and threaten them with Destruction; that it is most equitable and righteous that they should, without murmuring, restore the Child to the Lord who lent it, whenever he demands it; that by opposing his Will they most certainly increase

create their present Misery, and provoke God to inflict greater Evils upon them; whereas they might conciliate the Favour of a merciful God, and confidently hope for greater Blessings either in this World or the next, if, as becomes them in their Situation, and under this Affliction they shall conform their Wills to God's, and patiently undergo that Event which God shall give to the present Calamity.—Though I say the whole Duty of a Pastor in visiting Infants consists in what has been said, yet I would advise him to proceed to Exhortation, if the Persons to be visited have been initiated in the *Christian Faith*, and are come to some tolerable Knowledge of their Duty. He should in that case make some Enquiry what Sense the young Man entertains of future Concerns, and relate to him what he thinks of the immense Joys of another World, and of that perfect Freedom and Immunity, from all those Things which hurt the Health of the Soul and Body, which he shall enjoy after this Life; of the beatific Vision of God, and the most charming Society of Angels and Saints, which he shall for ever enjoy in Heaven. If he shall discourse of these and such like Things copiously and perspicuously,

ously, he might edify the Standers by, and also the sick Youth himself; for by this Method, having removed those Errors which make Death too terrible; he will inculcate those Truths upon the Child which will calm his Mind for a Season, and will lessen the Fear of Death, if it does not also kindle a Desire even of dying.

In such a Case he may, with a serious Air, address or bespeak him in this Manner: Do not, my Child, fear Death, for those have no Need to fear it who depart innocent out of this Life; it is indeed a dreadful and horrible Prelude to the Wicked and Ungodly of those Torments which await them in the other World, but to the Spotless and Undeiled it opens a Way to Joys so immense and boundless, that if they were clearly perceived and fully apprehended by thee, they would call thy Soul immediately out of the Body, since no Mortal could possibly bear the Splendor and Weight of them. Thy Soul, when it leaves the Prison of thy Body, shall immediately return to God that created it, to whom thou art dearer than to thy Parents in this World; nor are they capable of

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that great and tender Love which our Heavenly Father bears towards the Innocent and Good. Then thou shalt enjoy the perpetual Presence of God, than which nothing can be more happy; and thou shalt have Companions, not such as thou hast here, who wear away Life in Vanity and Lies, and make thee pleased or joyful with their empty and foolish Toys, but Angels and Saints in Heaven, whose fervent Love and boundless Charity, whose exalted and just Speculations which will be always open to thee, whose ardent Prayers to God, and sincere Gratitude towards their greatest Benefactor, will fill and cheer thee with perpetual and endless Pleasures; *such as Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it ever entered into the Heart of Man to conceive them.* Then, in an Instant, and without any Labour, thou wilt obtain that Knowledge, which now many wear out their Bodies with Watchings in the Pursuit of, and by too close Application tire out and enervate their Minds. Then thou wilt clearly see the stupendous Fabrick of the Universe, hitherto not sufficiently understood by any mortal Man. Then thou wilt see clearly the real Causes of Things, and their Events, which have hitherto escaped the

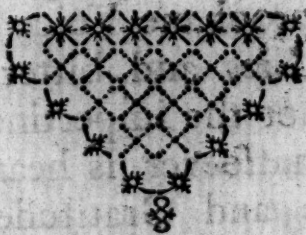
the most accurate Disquisitions of the Learned; and then thou wilt greatly rejoice that thou art freed from those Errors, and the Perplexities about God's Providence which have hitherto entangled the Thoughts of busy and over-curious Men: And when thou art furrounded with those Joys and Comforts, thou wilt feel thyself happier, than 'tis possible for thee to be here in this Life, though every Thing should accord to thy Wishes, though thou wert the wisest of Men, though thou couldest obtain the highest Honours, and couldest securely possess and enjoy the greatest Riches, and aboundest with the most envied Pleasures of this World, and therefore thou wouldest offer thy best Thanks to God, and repay him thy most ardent Love, that he has allowed thee to finish thy Journey in a short and happy Course, which thou knowest is long and very troublesome to others; that he has made thee so soon Partaker of those immense Pleasures: nor shall thy Body be detained long in the Grave from those Joys of the Righteous; for though it shall sleep some Time in the Earth, yet it shall certainly rise again in God's own appointed Time, not such as we now see it, in Want of Food and Cloathing, Sleep and Medicine, Ob-

noxious to many Disorders and Casualties from within and without, and subject to Corruption and Decay, but Glorious, and by the immense Favour of God, who shall raise it in his Time, freed from the Laws of dull and sluggish Matter, void of all Want, free from all Pain, and not liable to the Hazard of Death; then this glorified Body shall be united to its Soul for ever, and thou shalt wholly enter into the Joy of thy Lord; then thy Eyes shall enjoy eternal Day, and shall behold the Light more clear and bright than the Rays of the Sun; then you shall behold with your Eyes, amazingly enlightened and purified, the stupendous Structure of the Heavens, and its amazing Beauties and Ornaments; and thou being thyself glorified, shalt behold with Joy the glorious Bodies of those who are raised from the Dead. Thou shalt see, likewise, the Saviour of the World himself (to whose unspeakable Love all these Joys are owing) and behold him with a much more chearful Aspect than you ever beheld any One of your beloved Companions. You will also see, never more to be separated from you, your Parents, and all those others you loved upon Earth, if they, by a true Faith in *Christ*, and sincere Repentance,

Repentance, have made themselves capable of the Joys of Heaven : Then you will most earnestly listen to the most harmonious Sounds of the Heavenly Choir, and the unspeakable Harmony of that sacred Assembly, you will most joyfully increase it, whilst you jointly celebrate with them the immense Goodness of God, the infinite Wisdom and boundless Power, and his other Attributes and Perfections, whilst you resound together with them the Praises of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with a grateful Soul, and a sweet Voice. My Child, from that happy Place every Thing is banished which may disturb your Quiet, or offend your Ears : In Heaven thou wilt not hear the confused Noise of Tumults, not the disagreeable Clamours of Soldiers, not the dismal Messengers of Slaughters, not the indecent Wranglings of Combatants, not the prophane Voice of Blasphemers, not the Lies and bitter Scoffings of the Envious, nor the impertinent Triflings of Fools. Whatsoever is heard there, favours of Love and Gratitude, and will greatly promote your Happiness. To speak all in few Words, when you shall inhabit that happy Region, all the Faculties of your Soul and Body will be perfected beyond

2 satisfied with Objects that will never cloy
 / yond your Wishes, and will be eternally
 3 or weary you. And now I would have you
 tell me, young Man, whether you would
 not willingly change this present Life for
 that future happy one; and, if you could
 choose for yourself, whether you would
 not, without Delay, hasten to God, rather
 than prolong this Life any farther, and
 thereby expose yourself to the Hazard of
 losing those Joys reserv'd in Heaven for you.

*[Let the Minister likewise exhort such young Person
 that he would constantly repeat those Prayers or Devotions
 which he retains in his Memory, and especially
 the Lord's Prayer, which comprehends all those Petitions
 in a Kind of a Table or short Abstract, which it
 is our Duty to offer up to God.]*



APPENDIX.



A P P E N D I X.

I shall now treat of the various Methods proper to be used in bringing such Persons to a Sense, and, if necessary, to a Confession of their Sins.

ALTHOUGH there is no Command of God whereby any one is obliged to reveal all his Sins to any Priest, which he has ever secretly committed against God, his Neighbour, or himself, yet it is necessary, and warranted by Divine Command, that every one should examine his own Conscience, that he might the more thoroughly know his hidden Faults, and submit them to a fair Examination. And sometimes it is convenient, and it is greatly for the Interest of every sick Person that he should discover and lay open the more secret Maladies of his Soul to some faithful Minister, to be weighed and examined by him. For there are many Cases that occur, in which he who cautiously dissembles them cannot

cannot possibly expect any salutary Counsel from any one. But most People are so little disposed towards this just and necessary Care of their Salvation, that you seldom find a Man who would willingly undergo the Burthen of fairly examining himself, or, laying aside a false Modesty, would disclose those Wounds of his Conscience to the Pastor, which must first be opened before they be healed.

And therefore every Pastor, who has the Care of Souls, ought to have great Prudence and Discretion, that he might lead this Sort of Men to those unwelcome Offices, that, whether they will or no, they might bring them to Confession; and however the Sick may conceal them, that he may get Knowledge of their former Morals, which will be necessary for this Purpose, that he might edify them by his own Counsel. But in what Method the Pastor shall proceed, that he might bring the sick Person to a just Sense of his Faults, and fish out what he ought to know, I cannot easily determine. For those who despise and have an Aversion to a due Examination of their Conscience, and industriously conceal those Vices which they ought to discover

discover to others, they are acted by various Motives ; they can hardly be brought to their Duty by the self-same Method ; nay, according to the various Motives which make an Impression on their Minds, are to be differently treated, and in this Manner he will proceed with the Parishioner.

1. Let him try the Effect of more general Exhortations, by which I advise every sick Person to be prompted to an accurate Examination of his past Life.

2. Let the Visitor use proper Interrogatories, unless he shall foresee they will be to no Purpose, or he shall not by those Means make much good Impression upon the Sick.

3. Let him treat more fully and clearly of the absolute Necessity and Benefit of that Scrutiny and Examination he before recommended, and also of the Advantages he may justly hope for from a free and open Confession of his Faults : Then let him discourse of the Imprudence, or rather Madness of those, who thro' Sloth, Fear, Shame, or any other Cause, are negligent

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in the performing such necessary and useful Duties.

4. Next, let him enquire with the utmost Diligence, what is the great Obstacle that prevents the sick Man, either from seriously recollecting his past Life with himself, or from revealing his Faults to a Pastor he knows will most certainly conceal them, and will give him the best Counsel and Advice, and let him heartily endeavour to remove that Impediment, be it what it will. For Instance, If the sick Man therefore defers the Examination of his Life, because he is indolent, and hates to take any Pains, then the Pastor must labour with all his Might, to rouse him out of his Drowsiness, and stir him up to Labour and Industry ; and to this Purpose let him address him thus : —

You know, my Brother, that he who does not truly repent cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; and know assuredly, that he cannot exercise true Repentance, who has not accurately searched and examined his own Conscience : For he that is truly penitent, bewails his former Sins, will abhor and resolve firmly against them, he will humbly implore God's Pardon for them,

them, and make Satisfaction for all Injuries, to the best of his Power, that he hath committed against any; which *he* cannot well do, who is so far from weighing the Heinousness of his Sins, and the Punishments due to them, that not having yet searched his Conscience, he does not know what they are.— Be sure therefore cast off this baneful Sloth, and at length strenuously exert yourself to work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling: Recollect, to the best of your Power, what you have ever done amiss, and don't think much of your Labour, for it will be lighter than you expect it to be, and if it should be heavier or greater, yet you ought to undergo it; and you will be enabled to bear it with an undaunted Resolution, if, on this Side, you duly consider that immense Reward wherewith it will be for ever compensated after this Life; and on the Other, seriously weigh those infinite Punishments of Hell wherewith you will be eternally tormented, if you decline that Labour through Sloth and Negligence.

For what, I pray you, Brother, would you think of that Person, who being doubtful of every other Way of enriching himself, should therefore lay aside the present,

because he is an Enemy to all Labour and Study; would not you call such a One an idle Person? And would not you think such a One deserved rather Blame than Pity, if you should see him struggling with Want and Poverty?

And unless you are a partial Judge of Things, you will bring a heavier Sentence against yourself, if you sleep over the Time in which you ought and can work out your eternal Salvation; if by abusing the present Time to vain Thoughts, idle Words, or unlawful Actions, you be idle and slothful in those Things upon which your eternal Salvation necessarily depends, which are of such a Nature, that if you duly perform them, you may be secure of obtaining eternal Salvation, but if you wilfully neglect them, you will most certainly lose it for ever.

Therefore at length rouze yourself, and manfully undertake this Work, whatsoever it is, and do not be afraid of Success, for I will in great Measure lessen it to you; for I am ready, if you desire it, either to rehearse to you some exact Catalogue of Vices, or to repeat the Commandments of God, and to reckon up those Vices which are prohibited under each of them; and I shall

shall do this with a willing Mind, not that I may artfully extort or draw from you those Secrets you would have concealed, but that I may be a friendly Monitor or Assistant to you, in recollecting your Faults, that you may the more easily come to the Knowledge of those Sins which you ought to confess to God.

Then let the Minister proceed in what Way he pleases, to mention all those Sins by which we may violate both Tables of the Decalogue or ten Commandments, and especially those to which the sick Person may be more prone, either by his Station of Life, or predominant Habit of Body or Constitution.

If the sick Person is therefore averse to a serious Examination of his past Conduct, because he is afraid, lest the horrid Sight of his Deformities should terrify him; then let the Minister acquaint him, that those Horrors of the Mind, which he believes will follow a due Recollection of his Faults, are much easier to be borne than those which would else disturb him for ever; and that it is not the Part of a prudent Man to expose himself to the *latter* to avoid the *former*. And then let him farther

ther address him, If any skilful Physician should recommend to you a bitter Dose of Physick, whilst you were afflicted with a dangerous Sickness, you would eagerly drink it, nor would you reject it, on account of the disagreeable Taste it must of Course have, in order to promote your Recovery : If you had received a dangerous Wound, you would willingly suffer it to be opened, and even cut to the Quick, nor would you despise the Medical Hand which you believe would give Strength to your wounded Body, though the Application must be attended with grievous Pain.

To what End therefore do you, on Account of their Bitterness, neglect and despise those Remedies by which your wounded Mind may be made Whole again, and your wounded Conscience be healed ? Do you set a less Value on the Health of your Soul than your Body ? Do you think it can be made Whole without taking this Care ? Certainly Mistakes are dangerous on one Side as well as on the other ; for the Soul is much more excellent than the Body, and the Health of the one is far preferable to that of the other, nor can we entertain any good Hopes of Success, unless we observe
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the fore-mentioned Rules: — Therefore, submit your past Life to a diligent Examination, and the Troubles you now so much dread, as they must be gone thro' so they will be salutary, and at length when the Mind gains Strength, they will terminate in Rest and Serenity, which cannot else be obtained; and when you have secured this, a Reflection on those Troubles will afford you no small Pleasure and Satisfaction.

Next let the Minister use the Litany, and in the Course of his visiting the Sick, he may insert, according to the sick Man's Case, Petitions against less common Vices, if he shall think it fitting and expedient for the Sick.

Almost every sick Person can, by these innocent Methods, be brought to some Searching of his Conscience, nor can it be conceived, but being thus treated, he shall be sensible of his own Guilt, and at least acknowledge to himself, if he has ever committed what all Persons hold to be criminal, and which no one was ever guilty of without some Reluctance and Struggle of Mind, such as Perjury, or False-Swearing, Murder, Adultery, Robbery, and other such heinous Sins.

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And as to those Crimes which Men commit daily, and without Scruple, which are commonly thought to be none, or very small Crimes, such as are confined to the Mind, as Anger, Pride, Envy, and all unrighteous Thoughts; and also the Hurt of our Neighbour, as to his Character, when we speak those Truths of him which Justice neither demands, nor Charity requires: And next those lesser Frauds, which we may see almost every where in buying and selling of Goods, the tempting People to Drunkenness or any other Vice; a frequent Neglect of public Prayers and the Sacrament; the Omission of Works of Charity; the Delay of making just Restitution, and, to speak all in a Word, most Sins of Omission. And as to these, he will necessarily be sensible of his Guilt, under this Treatment, if he has at any Time committed them, but perhaps will not acknowledge himself therefore guilty. For as he always held such Practices to be lawful, he will not be easily induced to confess them to be Sins.

And therefore if the Pastor shall have any Ground of Suspicion that the sick Man visited shall entertain favourable Thoughts
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of a good part of his Conduct, and not allow that to be sinful which in Fact is so, it will then become him to treat peculiarly of that Crime, and shew its Malignity: And to this End, he will point out those Places of Scripture wherein this Vice is expressly or indirectly prohibited and forbidden, and inform him, that this is branded as worthy of eternal Damnation in the Judgment of all Divines, and if he thinks otherwise, his corrupt Affections are the Cause of it. He should observe, that it will not profit him at God's Tribunal, to say, that he thought that to be lawful, because many commit it without Scruple, or because it was not forbidden by any Human Laws; for his tremendous Judge will say, and his own Conscience will bear Witness, that God gave him a Law, and that his Manners were to be directed by it, and not by the Examples of men, or any Human Laws; that it will be imputed to him as a Crime that he was so ignorant of the Law of God, nor will affected ignorance excuse him, if he imprudently transgressed and broke through it.

If the sick Man has no Inclination to confess his Faults, which ought to be re-
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vealed, that proper Counsel may be administered to him, the Minister must enquire the Reasons why he will not discover 'em; whether he is ashamed to confess that which he did not blush to commit, or is afraid lest the Minister, out of Malice or foolish Lenity, should discover those Things to others, or else, lest the Pastor, if he should know his more secret Crimes, should entertain a bad Opinion of him? If a false Shame should restrain him from speaking what a true Modesty could not hinder from acting, then the Pastor will accost him in this Manner :

You would not be backward to discover any scandalous Diseases to a faithful Physician if you should consult him about the Health of your Body. If any One should bring an Action against you, or you should prosecute another, you would by no means conceal what would serve your Cause from the Lawyer, on whose Skill and Judgment you rely; nay, unless you were very imprudent, you would voluntarily show him all those Faults or Defects which you yourself perceive in your Cause: And why should you not discover the hidden Vices of the Mind to him whom you desire to consult
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as the Physician of your Soul ; he will certainly pity your Calamity ; he will not laugh at or trifle with you ; he will teach you how to wash away your Sins, and conceal them from the Knowledge of Scorners ; he will not make you blush by openly publishing to others what you have absurdly or foolishly done.

If the sick Man should be afraid lest the Confessor should discover the Secrets entrusted with him, and therefore does not care to own his Faults, in that Case let the Minister address him thus : — “ You have no Reason, Brother, to be afraid that I shall discover those Things to others, which I have heard in the Course of your Confession, for no Entreaty or Bribe shall ever tempt me to do that, for I should deserve to be punish’d with an ignominious Death, if I should betray those Secrets committed to me, if they were of such a Nature as I might conceal them without a Sin to myself : And I say this not with a View to extort or force any Secret from you, nor do I desire you to tell me what you are willing should be concealed ; but that you reveal to some other Person, whom you can place better Confidence in, those

Particulars, which it will be absolutely for your Interest should be known to him, who is to give you ghostly Advice and Counsel. Choose what Confidante you please; but as a Friend let me advise you not to conceal those Things from him, which unless he knows he can do you no Good by his Advice; for in vain you hope for salutary Remedies from a Physician who does not know the Disease you labour under, nor can you justly expect any Counsel from your Pastor should edify and profit you, unless he thoroughly knows the true State of your Mind or Soul.

If the sick Person has an Aversion to make a just Confession of his Sins, for Fear lest by his own voluntary Confession he should appear mean in the Eyes or Esteem of his Pastor, then let him say to him, he has no Reason to fear that; nay, rather he may be assured that he and all others shall therefore think better of him, for the more particularly and willingly he confesses his Sins, he will afford a stronger Proof of his Repentance, and he is reckoned as it were innocent in the Eyes of the World, who is truly sorry that he ever sinned: But the Visitor will add, that he does not advise

wise him to confess to *him*, or any other, all his Offences, but only that he would confess to some Priest whom he likes, such Particulars as ought to be known, that he may give him proper Advice; as to the others, that it will be sufficient if he shall confess them in private to God, and for the future most carefully shun and avoid them. And as by this private Confession which is made to God, and by a careful avoiding of those Sins, every Sinner may be restored to God's Favour; so by these Means he may most certainly gain the Love of his Pastor, and secure his good Esteem, if he shall more willingly confess his more secret Sins to him, and seriously promise Reformation; nay, if he shall fulfil his Promises, and shall truly amend his Life, that his Minister will rejoice more over him, and think better of him than if he had never sinned. For as there will be more Joy in Heaven over one Sinner that Repenteth, than over Ninety-and-nine just Persons which need no Repentance; so upon Earth, at least amongst all sincere and well-disposed Men, and the pious Curates of Souls, there will be more Joy over one Sinner, humbly confessing his Sins, than over a vast Number of the Righteous, who are not obliged to discover their more secret Crimes.

If

If the sick Person shall remain inflexible, and cannot be prevailed on by the above Arguments to confess any Thing, which he ought to do to receive satisfactory Counsel, then let the Minister address him thus: — “ There are some Crimes, my Brother, which cannot be discovered to any one without Hazard, because no One has a Right to conceal those, however he comes to the Knowledge of them, such as Murder, Treason, and whatever Others, which ought to be made public for the Good of the Commonwealth: Nor do I persuade you (for no one is obliged to betray himself) that you should rashly throw yourself into Danger, by confessing those Crimes to me, or any other Person, if you stand guilty of them. Yet I advise you as to these or any other Faults, which thro’ a false Modesty or unjust Fear you are restrained from a fair and open Confession of, that you would signify those to some prudent Guide of Souls, under the Character of some third or indifferent Person; and then you may diligently enquire of him what a Man that is guilty of them must do to be saved. You may by Letters, by concealing your Name, and without any Fear of Disgrace, or Danger of Punishment, propose

propose the State of your Soul to be weighed and considered by any one, and request such wholesome Advice as he shall be pleased to give. Or, if you must treat by Word of Mouth, because through Weakness of Body, or your Ignorance in Writing, you cannot discover your Mind by Letter, you may speak to the Pastor so covertly, that he cannot conclude absolutely from your Discourse that you yourself ever committed those Sins, by hinting that you are intimately acquainted with a Man, whom you know or suspect to be guilty of this or that Crime; and since you wish him all Happiness, that you will use your best Endeavours whilst you live that he may discharge his Duty: And to this End you desire to know of him what Advice he would administer to an Offender this Way. Perhaps by these Means you may raise some Suspicion in the Mind of your Minister, but he cannot, though he has ever so bad a Design or Inclination, upbraid you with those Crimes, since he is not privy to them; nor can he discover them to others, to your Disgrace, or notable Prejudice or Injury. For such a Minister would deservedly expose himself to the Derision of all, and be branded and stigmatiz'd with a just
Mark

Mark of Imprudence and Unfaithfulness, if, by putting a wrong Construction on the Expressions of his Patient from his own slight Suspicion, he should make it his Business to hurt him in any Respect whatever.

The pious Mr. HERBERT thus expresses himself in his *Priest to the Temple*, Page 65.— Besides in his visiting the Sick, or otherwise afflicted, he followeth the Church's Counsel, viz. in persuading them to particular Confession, labouring to make them understand the great good Use of this antient and pious Ordinance, and how necessary it is in some Cases. He also urgeth them to do some pious, charitable Works, as a necessary Evidence and Fruit of their Faith, at that Time especially, to the Participation of the Holy Sacrament, shewing them how comfortable and sovereign a Medicine it is to all sick Souls; what Strength, and Joy, and Peace, it administers against all Temptations, even in Death itself. He plainly and generally intimateth all this to the Disaffected, or sick Person, that so the Hunger and Thirst after it may come rather from themselves, than from his Persuasion.

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The next contains two general Forms of addressing the Sick, by the Rev. Dr. BENEDICT SCROGGS, found amongst his Papers after his sudden Death.

YOU know, my Brother, how necessary it is for Penitents at *all* Times, and especially in their last Moments, to recollect all their past Sins to the best of their Power, and confess them before God; for as no Man sins in general, so no One repents of his Sins in general, and therefore it will be in vain to hope that you can overthrow or root out this great Load of Sins with one single Effort of Sorrow. Besides, whatever Criminal stands indicted in a Court of Judicature, it must be for particular Facts by him committed; nor can any good Action be maintained against him, without specifying the Offence; therefore erect a Tribunal in *thy own Conscience*, and press home the Accusation against thyself to the best of thy Power. For in this Case Mercy is rather a Cruelty, and does any

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One great Hurt ; and if thou judgest thyself in this Manner, the Scriptures say, thou shalt not be judged or condemned by God hereafter.

But that you may perform a Concern of this Importance in a right Manner, you ought to use some Method to refresh your Memory, that no Sins, at least the more heinous ones, may escape your Notice. It is easy for a sick Man to call to his Remembrance the Ten Commandments in general, and consider the Sum and Substance of what they command or forbid, and apply his own particular Case or Condition to them. - - - - -

But, my Christian Brother, whenever thou shalt find thyself guilty of any Crime, which I presume will be often the Case, weigh and consider it dressed up in all those hideous Circumstances which are wont to aggravate the Guilt of it ; as for Instance, that thou hast committed it contrary to the Dictates of thy Conscience ; that thou hast committed it though fortified by Divine Grace, and hast committed this Crime unmindful of the Divine Clemency towards thee, and quite ungrateful, and after thou hast done all this, least any
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of thy Faults should lie hid from thee, I wish thou wouldest carefully and strictly examine these three Sorts of Sins.

First of all, those Sins which are incident to thy Profession and Way of Life, in which it is probable thou mayest fall or transgress oftner than in others. And I would often do the same myself, if it pleases God my Life should be in Danger, and would particularly enquire wherein I had ever been deficient, either through Negligence or Want of Care, or any Guile or Fraud in discharging my Duty as a Minister of the Gospel.

2. In examining those Points, I would have you observe, with particular Care, what Sins may arise from your particular Temper of Body, or *natural Constitution*. For when Nature itself stirs up the Passions, it is no Wonder if we commit all Unclean-ness with Greediness.

3. You ought in the next Place to examine into those Sins with particular Care, which you have contracted by the Society of bad Men, or Contagion of the World; for from hence are derived most of our E-

vils, and all our Miseries in this World and the next.

These, my Brother, are the necessary Admonitions I thought to give thee, that when I make my next Visit thou mayest profitably receive the Absolution of the Church, and the Holy Sacrament; in the mean Time if any Difficulty occurs, which may beget Scruples in thy Mind, or any tormenting Thoughts, or if you want my Counsel or Advice in any other Matter, I am ready now to do my Duty towards you, and help forward the Salvation of your Soul to the best of my Power.

You will pardon me, my Friend, and attribute it to the Nature of the Pastoral Office and Care, if I seem to insist upon more rigid Terms than usual, than either the present Times admit, or you perhaps might expect from me: For it is the natural Unhappiness of Mankind in general always to be partial and too favourable to themselves and Actions, whether good or bad.—Many are Flatterers of others, but all of themselves.

But this Misfortune might be somewhat more tolerable in the Meridian of Life, amidst Rioting and Mirth; but now alas! when

when you are just expiring, almost in the last Agonies of Death, what great Hazard it would be to your Soul, should either I flatter you, or you flatter yourself, you will be easily satisfied if you but reflect that Eternity depends upon this single Moment, and remember that you must shortly give a severe Account of all your Actions in this Life.

Know, therefore, that before the awful Tribunal of God, he will not be absolved by the Divine Sentence who hath spent his Life carelessly and idly, without any Zeal or Vigour in his Service, nor that the immense Rewards of Heaven are to be obtained with a little Pains and Labour, nor that any one will always live in the Presence of God, who, as *Christ* says, is not like him in Holiness and Goodness. But thou, my good Friend, canst acquire this Perfection only by a grave and sincere Repentance, a thorough Change of the Heart and Life, a Ceasing to do Evil, and learning to do well.

Here ends this excellent and pious Treatise of Visiting the Sick, which contains Matter of good Instruction for the Pastor and People, to furnish their Minds with
wholesome

wholsome Thoughts and profitable Advice, under all Conditions, and support and comfort their dejected Minds; and acquaint them how to be at Peace with God and themselves, and be wise and happy for ever.

And to supply any Defects in the foregoing Treatise, I shall here subjoin a few Extracts from two eminent and pious Bishops of our own Church, the very learned Dr. JEREMY TAYLOR, and laborious and vigilant Dr. BURNET.—Bishop *Taylor* gives this Advice to his Clergy in Visiting the Sick,

Every Minister ought to be careful in Visiting all the sick and afflicted Persons of his Parish, ever remembering, that as the Priest's Lips are to preserve Knowledge, so it is his Duty to administer Comfort in the Time of Need.

A Minister must not stay till he is sent for, but of his own Accord and Care go to them, to examine them, to exhort them to perfect their Repentance, to strengthen their Faith, to encourage their Patience, to persuade them to Resignation, to the Renewing of their Holy Vows, to the
Love

Love of God, to be reconciled to their Neighbours, to make Restitution and Amendments, to confess their Sins, to settle their Estate, to provide for their Charges, to do Acts of Piety and Charity, and, above all Things, that they take Care they do not sin towards the End of their Lives ; for if Repentance on our Death-Bed seem so very late for the Sins of our Life, what Time will be left to repent us of the Sins we commit on our Death-Bed. When you comfort the Afflicted, endeavour to bring them to the true Love of God ; for he that serves God for God's Sake, it is almost impossible he should be oppressed with Sorrow.

Next, in answering the Cases of Conscience of the sick or afflicted People, consider not who asks, but what he asks, and consult in your Answers more with the Estate of his Soul than the Conveniency of his Estate ; for no Flattery is so fatal as that of the Physician or the Divine. Then if the sick Person enquires concerning the final Estate of his Soul, he is to be reprov'd rather than answered ; he is to be call'd upon to finish his Duty, to do all the Good he can in that Season, to pray for
Pardon

Pardon and Acceptance, but you have nothing to do to meddle with passing final Sentences; neither cast him down in Despair, nor raise him up to vain and unreasonable Confidences; but take Care that he be not carelessly dismissed.

In order to these and many other good Purposes, every Minister ought frequently to converse with his Parishioners; to go to their Houses, but always publicly, with Witness and with Prudence, lest what is charitably intended be scandalously reported; and in all your Conversation be sure to give good Example, and upon all Occasions give good Counsel.

Bishop BURNET, in his incomparable Book of the Pastoral Care, Page 172, 173, thus judiciously expresses his Sentiments on this Head.

One of the chief Parts of the *Pastoral Care* is, the *Visiting the Sick*, not to be done barely when one is sent for; he is to go as soon as he hears that any of his Flock are ill, (though this is not very often done). He is not to satisfy himself in going over the Office, or giving them the Sacrament when desired; he ought to inform himself
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of their Course of Life, and of the Temper of their Mind, that so he may apply himself to them accordingly. If they are insensible, he ought to awaken them with the Terrors of God, the Judgment, and the Wrath to come. He must endeavour to make them sensible of their Sins, particularly of that which runs through most Men's Lives, their forgetting and neglecting God and his Service, and their setting their Hearts so inordinately upon the World. He must set them on to examine their Dealings, and make them seriously to consider, that they can expect no Mercy from God, unless they restore whatsoever they may have got unjustly from any other, by any manner of Way, even tho' their Title were confirmed by Law. He is to lay any other Sins to their Charge that he has Reason to suspect them guilty of, and must press them all to such Acts of Repentance as they are then capable of. If they have been Men of a bad Course of Life, he must give them no Encouragement to hope much from this *Death-Bed Repentance*; yet he is to set them to implore the Mercies of God in *Christ Jesus*, and to do all they can to obtain his Favour. But unless the Sickness has been of a long Continuance, and

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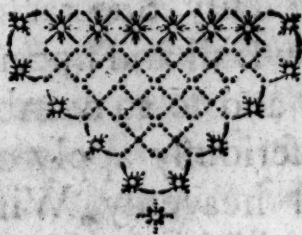
that

that the Person's Repentance, Patience, and Piety, have been very extraordinary during the Course of it, he must be sure to give him no positive Ground of *Hope*, but leave him to the *Mercies of God*. For there cannot be a greater Treachery to Souls that is more fatal and more pernicious than the giving quick and easy Hopes upon so short, so forced, and so imperfect a Repentance: It not only makes those Persons perish securely themselves, but it leads all about them to Destruction, when they see one, of whose *bad Life and late Repentance* they have been the Witnesses, put so soon in Hopes; nay, by some unfaithful Guides, made *sure* of Salvation: This must make them go on very secure in their Sins, when they see how small a Measure of *Repentance* sets all right at last. All the Order and Justice of a Nation would be presently dissolved, should the Howlings of *Criminals*, and their Promises of Amendment work on *Furies, Judges, or Princes*. So the Hopes that are given to Death-Bed Penitents must be a most effectual Means to root out the Sense of Religion of the Minds of all that see it; and therefore, though no dying Man is to be driven to Despair, and left to die obstinate in his Sins, yet, if
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we love the Souls of our People, if we set a due Value on the Blood of *Christ*, if we are touched with any Sense of the Honour or Interest of Religion, we must not say any Thing that may encourage others who are but too apt of themselves to put all off to the last hour, we can give them no Hopes from the Nature of the *Gospel Covenant*; yet, after all, the best Thing a dying Man can do is to *repent*; if he recovers, that may be the Seed and Beginning of a new Life, and a new Nature in him; nor do we know the Measure of the *Riches of God's Grace and Mercy*, how far he may think fit to exert it beyond the Conditions and Promises of the *New Covenant*, at least to the lessening of such Person's Misery in another State. We are sure he is not within the *New Covenant*; and since he has not *repented* according to the *Tenor* of it, we dare not, unless we betray our Commission, give any Hopes beyond it. But one of the chief Cares of a Minister about the Sick ought to be to exact or require of them solemn Vows and Promises of a Renovation of Life, in case God shall raise them up again. And these ought to be demanded not only in general Words, but if they have been guilty of any scandalous Disorders,

ders, or any other ill Practices, there ought
 to be special Promises made with relation
 to those, and upon the Recovery of such
 Persons, their Minister ought to put them
 in Mind of their Engagements, and use all
 the due Freedom of Admonitions and Re-
 proof upon their breaking loose from them.
 In such a Case they ought to leave a terri-
 ble Denunciation of the Judgments of God
 upon them, and so at least they acquit
 themselves. But the most the Clergy can
 do in these Cases, is to encourage them to
 do the best they can in their present sick
 and languid Condition, and to exhort them
 to Sincerity in their Vows and Promises ;
 and with the greatest Humility of Mind,
 and most earnest Supplications, to implore
 the infinite Mercy of God upon their Souls.
 The great Bishop STILLINGFLEET says,
 he is afraid there are too many who think
 they need look after no more than what
 qualifies them for the Pulpit ; but if we
 would do our Duty as we ought, we must
 enquire into and be able to resolve Cases of
 Conscience. *For the Priest's Lips should
 keep this Kind of Knowledge, and the People
 should seek the Law at his Mouth ; for he is
 the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*—These
 are the chief Acts whereby we may secure
 Respect

Respect and Esteem for the Ministry, and do Good to the Souls of Men as well as our own. Let us all resolve, endeavour, and take due Care to follow *St. Paul's* excellent Advice to *Timothy*: — Let no Man despise thy Youth, but be thou an Example of the Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity. Meditate upon these Things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy Profiting may appear to all. Take Heed unto thyself, and to thy Doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.— May we have Grace to consider and practice what has been said, and the Lord give us Understanding in all Things.



¶ *A commendatory Prayer for a sick Person
at the Point of Departure.*

O Almighty God, with whom do live the Spirits of just Men made perfect, after they are delivered from their earthly Prisons; we humbly commend the Soul of this thy Servant, our dear *Brother*, into thy Hands, as into the Hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour: most humbly beseeching thee, that it may be precious in thy Sight. Wash it, we pray thee, in the Blood of that immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the Sins of the World; that whatsoever Defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty World, through the Lusts of the Flesh, or the Wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure, and without spot before thee. And teach us, who survive, in this, and other like daily Spectacles of Mortality, to see how frail and uncertain our own Condition is; and so to number our Days, that we may seriously apply our Hearts to that holy and heavenly Wisdom, whilst we live here, which may in the End bring us to Life everlasting, through the Merits of Jesus Christ thine only Son our Lord.
Amen.

A Prayer

¶ *A Prayer for a sick Person, when there appeareth but small Hope of Recovery.*

O Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, our only Help in time of Need; we fly unto thee for Succour in behalf of this thy Servant, here lying under thy Hand in great Weakness of Body. Look graciously upon *him*, O Lord; and the more the outward Man decayeth, strengthen *him*, we beseech thee, so much the more continually with thy Grace and holy Spirit in the inner Man. Give *him* unfeigned Repentance for all the Errors of *his* Life past, and stedfast Faith in thy Son Jesus; that *his* Sins may be done away by thy Mercy, and *his* Pardon sealed in Heaven, before *he* go hence, and be no more seen. We know, O Lord, that there is no Word impossible with thee; and that if thou wilt, thou canst even yet raise *him* up, and grant *him* a longer Continuance amongst us. Yet forasmuch, as in all appearance the Time of *his* Dissolution draweth near; so fit and prepare *him*, we beseech thee, against the Hour of Death, that after *his* Departure hence in Peace, and in thy Favour, *his* Soul may be received into thine everlasting Kingdom through the Merits and Media-Media-

tion of Jesus Christ thine only Son, our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

¶ *A Prayer which may be used when the Sick Person shews signs of true Penitence.*

O Most merciful God, who, according to the Multitude of thy Mercies, dost so put away the Sins of those who truly repent, that thou remembrest them no more; open thine Eye of Mercy upon this thy Servant, who most earnestly desireth Pardon and Forgiveness. Renew in *him* (most loving Father) whatsoever hath been decayed by the Fraud and Malice of the Devil, or by *his* own carnal Will and Frailness; preserve and continue this sick Member in the Unity of the Church; consider *his* Contrition, accept *his* Tears, assuage *his* Pain, as shall seem to thee most expedient for *him*. And forasmuch as *he* putteth *his* full Trust only in thy Mercy, impute not unto *him* *his* former Sins, but strengthen *him* with thy blessed Spirit; and when thou art pleased to take *him* hence, take *him* into thy Favour, through the Merits of thy most dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

F I N I S.



